



NEWS FROM  
***JACK SCOTT***  
21<sup>ST</sup> SENATE DISTRICT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**FOSTER FAMILY BILL PASSES SENATE**

SACRAMENTO – The state Senate has overwhelmingly approved legislation aimed at making the foster care system more appealing to prospective parents while at the same time safeguarding the more than 90,000 children in the foster care system.

SB 358, authored by State Senator Jack Scott (D-Pasadena), would simplify the rules to permit foster parents to use their own judgment about who may baby-sit their foster kids. As is stands now, parents can only hire babysitters who have gone through health and background checks and been fingerprinted. As a result of these well-intentioned restrictions, foster parents cannot hire a temporary babysitter or even use a relative unless they meet all the qualifications.

“It has become very difficult to recruit and maintain foster families in California,” stated Senator Scott. “Studies show that 60% of foster parents quit within the first year. With this bill we hope to “normalize” the process to that parents who want an occasional night-out or who need to run to the store, don’t have to go through a lot of bureaucratic red tape. We need to encourage not discourage families to open their homes to these kids.”

SB 358 borrows the concept of the “prudent parent” standard so that a child can stay at home with a sitter of the family’s choosing. This only applies to short-term (less than 24 hours) babysitters who come into the home. It does not change the rules for long-term or respite care.

The legislation passed the Senate yesterday (May23) on consent by a vote of 39 to 0. The bill now goes to the Assembly for assignment to policy committee.

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